A Mournfull Elegie,

In pious and perpetuall

Memory of the most Honourable,

ROBERT,

Earle of ESSEX, and EVVE, Viscount *Hereford*, Lord *Ferrers* of *Chartley*, *Bourchier*, and *Lovaine*, late Lord chiefe Generall of all the Parliaments Forces, who exchanged his Life *Septemb.* 14. 1646.

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C

For the Tombe-Stone.

PAying a tribute teare, admitted be
To view this cover of Mortalitie;
Which becauſe fifty odd years it did detaine
A heavenly ſoul, within its earthly chaine,
Within this heap of ſtones is doom'd to be,
Till time ſubmit unto eternitie;
Which notwithſtanding, when you ſee it have
This Marble Statue, ſay it is a Grave,
Whoſe out-ſide, howſoever faire it be,
The inſide's putrifi'd deformitie:
This penance ended, 'cauſe it once was bleſt,
In entertaining ſo divine a Ghueſt,
In glorious forme it ſhall preſented be
To heavens unknown joyes, by the Majeſtie
Of God himſelf; there let his bleſt ſoule reſt,
Till that his body be with glory bleſt.

An Elegie on the death of the most honourable Earle of ESSEX.

TO shadow sorrow, seek not tears of brine,
For that's a womans Rhetorique, not mine;
I may paint part of grief, but cannot cry,
The tide's too great, to drop out misery;
Whole floods of tears must like a Cataract
Gush, and affright, when I my sorrowes act.
Shallow streams mutter, silent are the deep;
My flood her floodgate breakes, if I do weep:
Then come *Melpomene* with thy graving pen,
Sink deep into the iron hearts of men,
What they are senceleſſe of, array my Verſe
With accents sadder, then this sable Herſe.
Let every line my dull braine shall afford
Rend one good heart at least, let every word
Gaine one poor soule t'accompany to bliſſe,
This lamp of light, that here ecclipſed is,
To shine in heaven; a traine see that he have
T'attend him there, greater then to his grave
Attends his corps, or if my words may move
None elſe that do ſo well his vertue love:
Then let my captiv'd soule infranchis'd be,
To paſſe with his unto eternitie;
If earth-dull'd ſpirits ſuch height cannot aſpire,
Then for Aſſociates, let the heavenly Quire
Of Angells guard him, and his *Requiem* ſing,
Where unmaſqu'd joy, and perfect muſicke ring
His happie entrance, S. *John*, *Brooke*, *Hambden* be
Ready to waite with beſt obſervancie
On his approach. But ſay Malignant death,
What cauſed thee ſo ſoon to ſtop his breath?

Was

Was it that I thy cruelty might find?
Or th' generall hate thou bear'ſt to all man-kind?
To glut thy intralls, all-devouring grave,
Thou mightſt have tane ſome wretch whom need
A corner in the concave of thy womb, (makes crave
And have made that, not him, to fill the tomb
Of thy inveterate malice, our hearts griefe,
Could none ſuffice thee, but the Chiefeſt Chiefe
Of all our Sex? Muſt Jems of ſuch eſteem
Give luſtre to thy hated Diadem?
Or was it becauſe things of greateſt price
Unfit for earth, inhabit muſt the skies?
If it were ſo, yet for a little ſpace
Thou might'ſt have ſpared him, till of his race
One branch had iſſued forth, not at one time
Have crop'd both fruit and tree, even in the prime
Of all his glory, when th'admiring world
Upon his goodneſſe every eye had hurld,
When hope lay bedrid, and all comfort dying,
When cruelty her ſelf fate almoſt crying;
When neighbouring worlds his glory moſt envi'd,
Then Englands honour, Europes wonder di'd.
Which us to checke, the charitable skies
Embalme him with rich tears, ſent from bright eyes,
As if juſt heaven were pleas'd, that he ſhould have
A ſecond Deluge to attend his grave.
What ſad events have happened ſince his death,
Since much lov'd *Eſſex* was depriv'd of breath:
No day, nor night hath paſt, nay ſcarce an houre,
In which heaven hath not pleas'd to ſend a ſhower
Of tears to celebrate his obſequies,
Which men ſhould pay from over-flowing eies;
Storms have produced ſhipwracks, ſhipwracks dearth
Of food and fuell from the teeming earth,
Bread-corn, and firing, both are dearer ſold,
As if with him, all charity were grown cold,
As if the axill-tree of the world ſhould crack,
Which *Atlas*-like, he bore upon his back.

Our Kingdomes being in a tottering State,
God, by his hand, the ſame did regulate,
Prop, and uphold, which now at ſix and ſeven,
Again do hang, as if not ſwaid by heaven.
The Kings beſt friend, and eke the Kingdoms too,
Who loving both, to neither could be foe:
The Clergies Patron, and the Souldiers glory,
Both read him, and admire him in his ſtorie.
Germans, both high and low, lament with me,
That *Spain* and *France* joyes in your miſerie,
Occaſion'd through his fall, that Schiſmatiques,
Tub-Preachers, Anabaptiſts, Heretiques,
The Independents, Antinomians, Papiſts,
The Browniſts, and (which worſt of all) the Atheiſts
Begin to glory. In thy triumph, death,
Thou might'ſt have ſpared his, and ſtopt my breath:
Thy cruelty had then been kindneſſe ſtil'd,
And death to man-kind had been reconcil'd;
Thoſe few among the multitude of men
That wiſh me well, had Trophies to thee then
Erected; and inſtead of bitter Layes,
Thou hadſt been crown'd with Encomiaſtike bayes.
Me that am weary of a wretched life,
Neglected, friendleſſe, all compos'd of griefe,
Thou giveſt leave to ſee my Lords ſad death,
And after him to draw abhorred breath:
Him that was happy in all things under heaven,
By God or nature might to him be given,
Helpfull t'all, open-handed unto merit,
Sober in carriage, of an humble ſpirit:
Him that (like God of War) in conquering field,
His brandiſht ſword, ne're force of foe made yeeld;
Him haſt thou taken away, and me haſt left,
To moan his loſſe, of ſo much good bereft:
Could nothing ſerve thy wrath, for to appeaſe,
To ſpare his life, and breed our Kingdomes eaſe?
Could not the plaints of Peers, the Commons fears,
The Churches ſupplications, ſouldiers tears,

His ſiſters ſcorching ſighs, his kindreds groans,
The clamour of his friends, his ſervants moans,
The votes of Parliament, the orphans cries,
The poors Petitions, nor the weeping eies
Of widowes, move th'impartiall hand to dart
Thy death-wing'd arrow at ſome others heart?
They could not: why? becauſe his prayer was
That he might be diſſolv'd, with Chriſt, to paſſe
From hence to heaven; where moſt victorious he
In triumph treads on ſin, and deſtinie.
Hadſt thou with judgements eye but once beheld
His moſt Majeſtike face, it would have queld
Thy feareleſſe rage, as often it hath done,
When *Mars* himſelf, did ſmile on *Mars* his ſonne:
Let Edgehill-Fight and Gloceſter witneſſe be,
The famous battell fought at Newberie,
And thouſand Trophies more of victory,
Of proweſs and of magnanimitie,
By him obtain'd, had his unlimited ſoule
In other Lands been ſuffered, ſans controule,
To actuate what he at home hath done;
It had appear'd more glorious then the Sun.
'Twas he made ſmooth the rigid path of war,
'Twas he that did remove the enemy far
From our Avenues: Others did but build
On his foundation, he firſt gain'd the field.
Yet was he ſleighted, ſcoffed, ſcorn'd and jeer'd
By thoſe that lov'd him not; thoſe he not fear'd:
Stigmatike coxcombs, that durſt once to lay
Aſperſion on that Sun, whoſe light made day,
Which now Eccliplt, our Hemiſpheare is made
All night; our Sun is now become a ſhade:
And in this ſhade we now are left to moan,
Not *Eſſex* loſſe, but in his loſſe our own;
But I do but obnubilate his praiſe,
Striving unto a higher pitch to raiſe
What my impoliſht quill cannot expreſſe,
But by expreſſing, that I make it leſſe.

Hadſt

Hadſt thou this ſeen death, thou hadſt not then don
What now thou haſt, nor I had cauſe to moane;
But being gone, why do I waſt my breath,
'Tis he that triumphs, and not griſly death?
On him thy envie hath gain'd only this,
To change his fading good, for endleſſe bliſſe.
Let us not then as men without hope grieve,
Since that his purer part, his ſoule doth live,
That would of incredulitie us reprove,
Or challenge us of envie or ſelf-love;
To grieve would argue doubt of his eſtate,
Or envie that he proved ſo fortunate;
Or at the leaſt ſelf-love it would expreſſe,
In prizing our loſſe, not his happineſſe.
But here me thinks, I hear ſome whiſpering, ask
How ſilly I dare undergo this task,
When many hundreds that more able are,
Who in his loſſe do likewiſe claime a ſhare,
Have and do daily write in mourning Verſe,
With which to garniſh this bedewed Herſe?
I anſwer, all that write, write not for love,
Faſhion their pens, but paſſion mine doth move;
My hope doth therefore guide me to believe,
My mite ſhall be received, with theirs that give
Abundantly: but this digreſſion leaving,
With his pure ſoule, let prayers fly to heaven,
That all ſurviving Peers, now left behind,
May be affected in their ſoul and mind
As he hath been; that when fate ends their dayes,
They may be crown'd with never-dying Bayes
Of good name here, and with that bleſt renown
Of laſting joy, the everlaſting Crowne,
In a far better world, as he now is,
Being poſſeſt of never-ending bliſſe;
I then ſhall think me truly happy, when
Divineſt Ecchoes anſwer ſhall AMEN.

J. B.